1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

241 the ordinary axe, and there is little or no 'waist' by the socket. It is, on a smaller scale, like the Cornish biddox.

Though this is used by some Bison-horn Marias in the remoter tracts, its use is now definitely a sign of the Hill Maria. The Bison-horn Maria uses the ordinary *korki* of the plains, which the Hill Maria calls *koq-gudari*; the villages on the edge of the Abujhmar hills are beginning to use it instead of the *gudari*, but it is never seen in the villages in the interior of the hills. This is a shouldered iron hoe, the blade from the shoulders to the digging edge being almost square, the sides being only slightly longer than the edge. It scores over the *gudari* because it can also be used to scoop and shovel earth.

Last must be mentioned the solid iron crowbar or digging-stick, found in all Maria houses, and throughout Bastar. But in the [171] Abujhmar hills it is interesting to find that it is sometimes shouldered and is in form very like the Madras Sawaras' shouldered iron hoe illustrated at p. 361 of Hutton's *India Census Report* (1931). This is known to the Hill Marias as *pulu*. I have seen similar shouldered specimens occasionally among the Bison-horn Marias, and was told that they had been imported from the Malkangiri taluq of the Jeypore Agency; but there is no coming and going between that Agency and the Abujhmar hills. Of all the Marias' iron weapons [435] and implements the *pulu* is the dearest, owing to the weight of iron used. The blacksmiths charge a rupee, the price of three *gudari* or two axes. It is generally about a metre long, and the shouldered portion is about a quarter of the total length. Plain unshouldered specimens are more common. Its chief use is for digging up the various yams and jungle roots in the rains that form so important a part of the diet of all Bastar Koitor. Or it is useful for digging holes for the posts of houses, or grubbing up stumps, etc.; it never is used as a hoe.

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A little later they collect *kapani*, the wild bearded rice common in all old rice fields and fallows and at the edges of standing water, by holding a winnowing-fan in one hand and beating the grain of the standing ripe plants into it with the other; the bearded ears are sometimes plaited into '*sela*' fringes for ornamenting doors of houses at the new-eating festivals.

The men are adept in collecting the honey of various kinds of bees, though sometimes, despite forest rules, too prone to save trouble by felling rather than climbing a fine tree. For this purpose, and for tapping palm trees, they often fasten to the trunks of trees long thick bamboos, cutting the side shoots down to stumps four or five inches long to serve as ladder rungs. Gums are collected from many species of trees, for use as bird-lime or in securing the *kosa* silk whipping of arrow-heads, etc. In Dantewara and Bijapur tahsils the Forest Department has quantities of *tasar* silk cocoons collected by Bison-horn Maria men when, in the rains in the intervals between sowing and reaping their various crops, they go out to the forests in search of such delicacies as red ants' nests, ant-eaters, rats, squirrels and grubs. The cocoons are high on sal or *saja* trees; where the climbers cannot reach them they use long bamboo poles with a piece of bamboo fastened at an acute angle at the end to serve as a hook. They get about Rs. 3 a thousand cocoons from the Koshta weavers who employ them; the Hill Maria, however, generally collects only what cocoons he needs for his own purposes. Red ants' nests are cooked, leaves, ants and all, either with *pej* or *gato*, or by themselves and eaten with pulses as a vegetable. They are also a favourite febrifuge; a rough and ready remedy is to shake out the live red ants on to the patient's skull, when the formic acid of their stings is said to reduce the fever; the more elaborate method is to boil the nest, ants and all, and to strain off and use the juice as a febrifuge in small doses; this juice is said to taste sharper than any lime and believed to be invaluable for a long-standing fever. In collecting the palms of the dwarf palms *chhind* (*Phoenix sylvestris*), *P. acaulis*, and *buta chhind* (*P. farinifera*) for use for thatching, basketry or making rough cords for binding fences, the men not only collect the small dates or the flowers (according to season) and the edible pith of the *buta chhind*, but also the fat white grub of a certain beetle, which is also found in the stems of the toddy palm and in fresh green monsoon bamboo shoots. This is eaten fried in ghee or oil with a little spice and chillies, and is regarded as a great delicacy; it is sold in the Jagdalpur market for three or four pice, and even high-caste Hindus buy it. When white ants emerge in flying swarms early in the monsoon they collect them after they have shed their wings, or pull the wings

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These pillars are usually erected near a highway—not necessarily a motorable one. They are usually made of the wood of *terminalia tomentosa* or *shorea robusta* and are erected with ceremonies similar to those used for a menhir. 764 [824]

As far as I know, the pillars are always made by non-aboriginals, but since the Marias give their instructions to the carpenters about the patterns they want carved, they do thus throw some light on Maria psychology even if they do not illustrate their sense of art. For example, the pillar in memory of Kopa Dhurwa at Massenar was made by Bharto, an Oriya carpenter of Jagdalpur. The pillars for Barse Marka at Barrem and for Marvi Masa at Jabeli were both made by Anda Kalar of Potali. For Barse Marka's pillar his sister's son gave a bull calf worth twenty rupees, cloth worth five rupees, two rupees in cash and daily rations for the fifteen days while the carpenter was working. 764 532 [435]

There was a fine pillar to a wealthy Maria named Muchaki Hunga near Dilmilli on the main road from Jagdalpur to Dantewara. It is a fat, thick pillar, carefully squared, standing some fifteen feet high with elaborate carvings round the base and a decoration of crocodiles and pigeons at the top. The whole is surmounted by a trident, obviously suggested by the carpenter, and on this again is a small bird. On the west face of the pillar there are carvings of dancers wearing bison horns and six girls who are realistically portrayed with breasts and genitalia. Below them is a tiger, a crane and a peacock. On the south side is a picture of the dead man riding an elephant, an umbrella in his hand and bags of money at the saddle. Five women follow him with pots of rice-beer and spoons. Below them are rats. At the foot are men ploughing, deer and tigers. On the east side is a man riding a horse and fish, horses and a tortoise. To the north is a man and wife with their children, a gourd for taking beer from a pot and representations of snakes and birds. Below this are two pairs of dogs apparently copulating, and at the very bottom some men are carrying a pot of rice-beer.

Near the pillar is a grave built up in the modern Hinduized fashion and protected by a little shed. [177]

Near Massenar, at the end of a long row of *wraskal* menhirs is the pillar in memory of the famous Kopa Dhurwa. This is much more slender than the one at Dilmilli and is not so well carved. But it has carvings of Kopa himself on his elephant with the inevitable umbrella, a gun and a tobacco pouch. On his chest is a small circle which I was told represented his Jubilee Medal. The pillar is further decorated with carvings of men dancing with the bison-horn head-dress, boys and girls dancing with a pot of rice-beer, a man trying to drag away a girl by the hand, crocodiles,

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continue their old habit (shared by the Baigas and most of the Orissa tribes) of wiping themselves with leaves after defecation. This custom, along with beef-eating and the breeding of domestic pigs, appears to worry that slightly ludicrous figure, the pious social reformer, far more than more obvious social evils. In Orissa, for example, earnest attempts have been made to induce the Bondos, of all people, to use water after defecation. A few have begun to do so, using the village stream (sole source of water-supply) as a latrine: the only result of these rather pathetic endeavours at 'improvement' has been to make the water-supply of a few aboriginal villages as filthy as that of many 'advanced' areas. As a comment on this curious belief that a change in defecatory habits indicates an advance in culture, I note that in a famous Indian Public School, new boys are greeted with the question, 'Do you wash or wipe?' If a boy 'washes' he is regarded as coming from a definitely inferior social stratum.

Page 69, *line* 31. The multiple cord belt is not worn by Gadaba women, as Glasfurd says, nor by the Bondos, as Hutton says at page xiv of his Introduction to this book; it is a certain class of Kond women, notably the Kuttia Konds and the Konds round Nimgiri, who wear it. Gadaba women wear, not a belt, but a bustle made of many separate cords lashed together; this certainly gives them 'a strange appearance'. Juang women formerly wore belts made of a great number of little earthen cubes strung on cords. Cowrie belts are still common among the northern Murias.

Page 80, *line* 35. Cowries seem to have come back on the market again; I have seen them on sale in the bazaars and have noticed many new cowrie belts and fringes for the bison-horn head-dress. For notes on the use of the cowrie, see Grigson's communication to *Man* (Vol. XL, p. 159) on the subject, and my article, 'The Use of Cowries in Bastar State' in the same journal (Vol. XLII, pp. 121ff).

Page 81, *line* 11. Marias have told me that they distinguish two kinds of bison horn. Those of inferior quality are all-black in colour. The better type are white from the root to the middle and then dark to the tip; nowadays such horns fetch anything up to twenty rupees—sometimes a bullock is given in exchange for a fine pair. Marias go all the way from Dantewara into the Jeypore zamindari to obtain them.

Before leaving their village for a dance Maria youths often promise a fowl to Mahaprabhu, the Village Mother and the Departed saying 'Save us from hostile magic and the evil eye, and see that no feathers fall from our head-dresses. Let the drums give a good sound; let them not be broken'.

of ghotul leaders; it is distributed when a boy or girl leaves the ghotul after marriage; it is a convenient and compendious means of paying a fine. The chelik offer it to their drums before a wedding, and drink it in honour of Lingo at the end of the Pus Kolang dance.

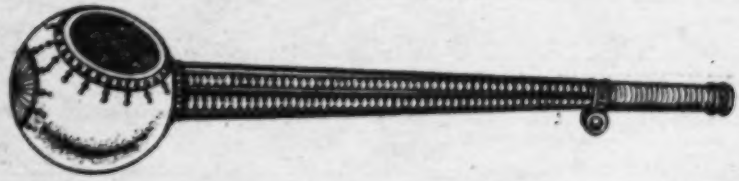

FIG. 13. Brass *orhi* used for ladling liquor
Length 8"-9"

This homely drink, so intimately connected with every aspect of their lives, so accessible to the forest-dwellers, so readily and cheaply prepared, may not be distilled by the Muria in Bastar or by the aboriginals anywhere. Its profits must be divided between the State and the middleman. Home-distillation is everywhere forbidden, and the privilege of the manufacture and sale of the spirit is farmed out to contractors in open auction. The business has thus passed into the hands of the most degenerate type of Hindu and Mussalman adventurer, for few aboriginals have either the means or the enterprise to compete with the sophisticated aggression of the outside world in the open market. These adventurers rob both the aboriginals and the State. They dilute the spirit; they put soda in it to cover the fact of their tampering; they make false returns; they use filthy water in unclean pots;[1] their shops are centres of the most degraded type of alien immigrant into tribal territory.

When the National Congress came into power in 1938, they declared that they would not apply their Prohibition laws to Europeans or aboriginals. It would have been more consistent had they allowed the aboriginal to distil his own liquor and had thus ceased to draw revenue from his drinking habits. The real evil of the present system is not that the aboriginal gets drunk, but that in order to get his liquor he is forced into contact with the worst type of alien and outsider.

In this respect conditions in Bastar are better than in many other parts of India. The Excise Department is efficient and understanding; the State controls the mahua trade, but allows the aboriginal great freedom in the use of toddy and salphi. But nothing can atone for the evil of depriving a primitive people of a natural right.

However, once that has been done, the arrangements in Bastar are as good as can be imagined. The spirit is cheap, only two annas a bottle,[2] and passes are freely granted to the Muria and Maria to purchase whatever is needed for ceremonial and social occasions. As a result there appears to be very little illicit distillation in either Kondagaon or Narayanpur. The figures of prosecutions for the five years, 1937–41, are these:

[1] The riddle 'Man and wife piss in the same lane', to which the answer is 'The two pipes of the still', probably hints at the dirt of the Kalar's out-still.
[2] This was in 1941.